



# Stephen Lewis Secondary School

Phone: 905-326-7994 Fax: 905-326-8136

555 Autumn Hill Boulevard, Thornhill, ON L4J 8X2

Website: <http://www.stephenlewis.ss.yrdsb.edu.on.ca>

**C. Diamond**  
Principal

**K. Shigeishi**  
Vice-Principal

**J. Hertz**  
Trustee

**H. Fox**  
Superintendent of Schools

## February 2008 Newsletter

### A Message from the Principal

Our focus continues to be on high expectations for all students, a safe, inclusive learning environment and student engagement and leadership. We believe that parents/guardians play a critical role in supporting students and staying connected with the school. Please join us for our many events, meetings and School Council sessions. Upcoming dates are listed in this newsletter and on our website.

Second semester begins with the important job of course selection for next September. Our information evening for current Grade 9-11 students and their parents/guardians is on Wednesday, February 13 at 7:00 pm. Please come and find out about how to help students make appropriate decisions about their courses and pathways for the future.

We also urge you to talk to students about arriving early in the morning and being on time for all classes daily. We will contact parents/guardians if students continue to arrive late or miss classes. Call the school if your son/daughter cannot attend school and let us know if there are any concerns.

Please ask students about the assignments, projects and tests that they are working on in their classes. They often need help in planning their time to complete work by the due date. If they need help or support with assignments or tests, their teachers will develop a plan with them, but the work must be done in order to meet ministry expectations and earn credits. We will contact parents/guardians if a student is experiencing difficulty in completing their work on time.

We need to work together to ensure that students are successful and progress each semester in accumulating credits. Please contact our teachers or administration if you have any concerns.

#### Course Selection Information Night

For current Grade 9, 10, 11 students  
and their parents/guardians  
Wednesday, February 13  
7:00 p.m.

### 12 hours for \$12K Wake-a-thon

This spring, the student body of Stephen Lewis Secondary School is on a mission to help children who are suffering from HIV/AIDS in Africa. Through an event organized by staff and students, known as "12 Hours for 12 K" Wake-A-Thon, our students are planning to raise over \$12,000 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation.



Staff and students will participate in a 12 hour event and our goal is to raise over twelve thousand dollars through the collection of pledges. All money raised will be donated to the Stephen Lewis Foundation, a non-profit

organization serving the sub-Saharan African community by providing care for women, orphans, and AIDS-affected children who are struggling to survive.

Currently, the World Health Organization states that 7000 people lose their battle to HIV/AIDS each day in sub-Saharan Africa. The number of orphans left behind and living in complete poverty is even more staggering than the death rate. By the end of this year over 2 million people will die in sub-Saharan Africa from HIV/AIDS.

"12 Hours for 12 K" will be taking place on Friday, April 11th. The event will begin at 7:00 p.m. at Stephen Lewis Secondary School and continue throughout the night until 7:00 a.m. the next morning. Students are expected to stay awake for 12 continuous hours and will participate in a variety of activities including sport intramurals, dancing, board games and more. We expect that over 100 students and staff will be participating. If you can sponsor and support this event with prizes or food items, please contact Mr. Morris, Ms. Plunkett or Ms. Piques.

## Dates Ahead

Feb. 13	Course Information Night
Feb. 14	Assemblies
Feb. 18	Family Day Holiday
Feb. 21	Semi-Formal
Feb. 29	Honour Roll Celebration
Mar. 6	Progress Reports issued
Mar. 7-14	March Break holiday
Mar. 17	School Council meeting
Mar. 21	Good Friday/Holy Friday holiday
Mar. 24	Easter Monday holiday
Mar. 27	EQAO Literacy Test
Apr. 11	12 hours for \$12K wake-a-thon
Apr. 13	Baisakhi
Apr. 14	Mid Semester 2 Report Cards Issued
Apr. 17	Parent-Teacher Interviews
Apr. 20	Passover/Pesah begins
Apr. 21	Ridvan begins
Apr. 22	Full Disclosure date (Grade 11s)
Apr. 25	Holy Friday (Eastern)
May 8	Grade 8 Leadership conference
May 9	Robotics Tournament
May 12	School Council meeting
May 19	Victoria Day holiday
May 20	Progress Reports issued
May 29	Arts Showcase
June 5	Athletic Banquet
June 13-17	Grade 9 EQAO Mathematics Test
June 13	Progress Reports issued
June 16	School Council meeting
June 18-24	Final Examinations
June 25	Examination return day
June 26, 27	P.A. Days (no classes)
July 3	Semester 2 final Report Cards available

## Please do not park in the bus loop

Students who are physically challenged are having difficulty getting on their buses and mini buses at the end of the day because vehicles are blocking the school entrance. Please do not wait for your students in the bus loop.

## School Council

All parents are welcome to attend. The next meetings will be held on March 17, May 12 and June 16 2008.

### 2007-2008 Executive

Chair: Debra Frank-Derlick

Secretary: Myrna Benderoff

Treasurer :Glenn Babcock

Executive Members: Riza Axelrod, Linda Behr,  
Lily Lukic, Alison Williams

Parent Members: Jigisha Randeria, Mahesh Randeria

## School Board Survey

In order to provide input into our Board Plan for Continuous Improvement, for the next school year, the York Region District School Board is launching a survey process to gather specific information between January and April 2008.

The intent of the surveys is to receive feedback from our school community about how we, as a school board, are doing in our efforts to improve our schools and student achievement. Additionally, the surveys will also collect feedback about our success in improving school safety, character development, and other areas that are important for student learning. During January to April, the following groups will be invited to participate in a survey:

- Students in grades 5, 7, 9 and 11
- Parents of students in grades 5, 7, 9 and 11
- Educational assistants, teachers, caretakers, school office staff, and administrators.

Please be assured that all information will be provided anonymously. No personal information or input is captured through this process. We appreciate your cooperation in this initiative. Your thoughts and insights will help set future directions as we work together to promote success for all our students across our district.

## @ Your Library

The White Pine Reading Program is back by popular demand at Stephen Lewis. White Pine is part of the Forest of Reading literacy initiative celebrating Canadian writers. It offers high school-aged teens the opportunity to read the best of Canada's recent young adult fiction titles and



white Pine™

vote for their favourite book from a list of 10 nominated

titles. The authors include: *The Droughtlanders*, Carrie Mac; *Yasabel*, Guy Gavriel Kay; *The Song of Kahunsha*, Anoush Irani; *Another Kind of Cowboy*, Susan Juby; *Keturah & Lord Death*, Martine Leavitt; *The Space Between*, Don Acker; *Grist*, Heather Waldorf; *The Warrior's Daughter*, Holly Bennett; *The Blue Helmet*, William Bell; and, *The End of the World as We Know It*, Lesley Choyce. The club meets several times per month. Any student interested in participating should come to the library to sign up and speak with Ms. Marinelli.

## Getting Ready for the Literacy Test

On Thursday March 27th, all of the Grade 10 students across the province will be engaged in writing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT).

### What is the OSSLT?

The purpose of the OSSLT is to determine whether or not students have acquired the reading and writing skills that they are expected to have learned by the end of Grade 9, as outlined in The Ontario Curriculum. Students **MUST** pass the OSSLT to earn their secondary school diploma.

### We can help you prepare for the OSSLT

Students who want to boost their skill level can now access the After-School Literacy Program. The After-School Literacy Program is 10 sessions long. Each class is an hour and a half and runs outside of the regular school day. This program is **free of charge**. The only thing we ask is a commitment to attend. To register, simply fill out the application form and return it to Ms. Ellis in the Guidance office.

### How can a student prepare for the OSSLT?

In addition to the preparation activities which will take place in classes, the following websites provide excellent opportunities for a student to practice for the OSSLT. They focus on all aspects of the test and offer a variety of on-line lessons that can be accessed from home or school.

#### **EQAO website:**

<http://www.eqao.com>

Click on student resources, then Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

#### **Ontario Educational Resource Bank:**

<http://resources.elearningontario.ca/>

User ID: YRDSBstudent

Password: oerbs

Click "I Accept"

Search for "OSSLT"

Click on: After Hours Literacy Program Bank ID: ELO1083120

#### **Ask a Teacher**

<http://www.ilc.org>

Click on Ask a teacher, then EQAO, then OSSLT, then test preparation.

#### **On-line Literacy help for the OSSLT**

<http://www.atherton.ca/literacy/>

## Course Selection

Guidance takes rapid action in second semester. As soon as students are settled into their classes, we begin the course selection process for next year. All students will participate in a course selection seminar where

they will be given the information and materials they need to make informed decisions. Course Request Forms, the Regional Course Directory and the SLSS 2008-2009 Course Offerings are available on-line at [www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ecalendars](http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ecalendars).

Wednesday February 13th is our Course Selection Shopping Day! We will have a modified schedule with lunch period extended so that students will have time to peruse the possibilities open to them in all subject areas.

Choosing courses is a family affair! We invite you to attend our Course Information Open House on Wednesday, February 13th at 7:00 p.m. Come to learn about the decisions that must be made at every grade level along the path to graduation and discover valuable information to assist your son/daughter to select courses to meet his/her individual needs. Take advantage of the opportunity to tour the facilities and speak to teachers who will be available to answer questions about high school courses.

All course request forms are due to Home Room Teachers **no later than Friday February 22<sup>nd</sup>**. The choices students make now will determine what courses will be offered next year!

If you have friends or family who are moving into our area and are interested in attending Stephen Lewis Secondary School, tell them to contact the Guidance Office for registration information as soon as possible.

## Developing Student Leaders

Our first Leadership and Peer Support Class was a Glowing Success! The students of Leadership and Peer Support were very busy since midterm with a variety of school and community based projects.

### Peer Tutoring

Students spent three weeks in another class of their choice working as peer tutors/mentors for other students. During this placement they practiced and applied many of the skills and concepts discussed in the leadership class. They really enjoyed this practical experience and many returned with an appreciation of the complexity of the teaching and learning process.

### Book Study

An excellent tool used to teach leadership and personal management skills is Sean Covey's novel, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*. Student groups were responsible for creating a presentation that would "teach" the key concepts in their assigned chapter of this text. The presentations were creative, informative and provided students with an understanding of highly effective personal management and interpersonal skills that can be applied to their daily lives.



### Summative Events

One of the key components of this course was learning and practicing how to run a school and/or community wide event from start to finish. Working in small groups

of their choice, students were responsible for creating an event proposal and presenting this proposal to the administration. They then proceeded to apply program design techniques to define and achieve their goals to produce exemplary work. Some of the projects of which the leadership team should be very proud:

Students raised **awareness about the perils of impaired driving** through a raffle, cafeteria games, and a multi-media presentation for the Grade 10



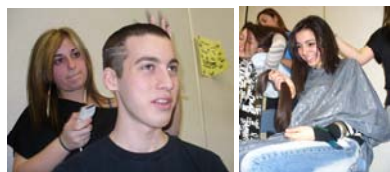
students by MADD (Mothers Against Drinking and Driving) Youth. \$150.00 was raised for the MADD organization. SLSS would like to thank the following organizations for sponsoring these

events: The Sony Store (Vaughan Mills), Rainbow Electric and Beauty Supplies (3600 Dufferin Street, Toronto), Sears (3401 Dufferin St., Toronto), Ganz (1 Pearce Rd., Woodbridge), Athlete’s World (3401 Dufferin St., Toronto), Incredible Novelties (incredible novelties.com).

Dwayne Morgan, a spoken word artist and motivational speaker, was invited to share his slam poetry and experiences with all grade 9 students. All **grade 9 English students** were then introduced to elements of this form of poetry and many wrote their own pieces that were shared at our Holiday showcase.

SLSS’ very first **Faculty Appreciation Day (FAD)** took place in mid-December. All teachers, office, and custodial staff were presented with a department specific card and an apple from the student body to show our appreciation for all of their hard work. Students were also able to purchase “apple-grams” for their teachers. \$90.00 was raised and through World Vision this money will be used to support three teachers with textbooks for an entire year in less privileged classrooms.

SLSS hosted its very first “**Shave to Save**” Event.



Several students and staff worked together to raise approximately \$375.00 for the Canadian Cancer

Society. On January 18, male students shaved their heads for this important cause and three female students each donated 20 cm of their hair that will be used by surviving cancer patients. We would like to

thank Ms. Mitchell and the personal services students for helping out with the hair cutting!

Students raised over \$90.00 that was used to purchase items for three gift baskets that were donated to elderly patients at York Central Hospital; a bake sale was held and raised \$65.00 for the Hospital for Sick Children; and \$55.00 was raised for the Stephen Lewis Foundation through a video game tournament held during lunch.

Not only did these events bring together students and community partners, but they also generated school spirit. We are looking forward to next year!

### Bad Weather

During the winter months, bad weather may force the disruption of bus transportation and regular school operations. This decision is made as early in the day as possible.

A decision to cancel school bus transportation may be **system wide** (where all buses in York Region are cancelled) **or municipality specific** (where buses in one or more municipalities are cancelled).

- Even though transportation in your municipality is running, if your child attends school in a different York Region municipality where transportation is cancelled, your child will **not** be transported to/from school.
- Even though your child attends school in a different York Region municipality where transportation is running, if transportation in your municipality is cancelled, your child will **not** be transported to/from school.

**If buses are cancelled in the morning, they will not operate in the afternoon. Therefore students transported to school by parents will require the same transportation home.**

Listen to any of the following stations for information:

590 AM	640 AM	680 AM	860 AM
1010 AM	1050 AM	1540 AM	1580 AM
102.1 FM	88.5 FM	89.9 FM	92.5 FM 93.1
FM	94.1 FM	94.9 FM	95.9 FM 97.3
FM	98.1 FM	99.1 FM	99.9 FM
101.1 FM	104.5 FM	100.7 FM	107.1 FM
CFTO	CITY TV	Global News	
AChannel	The Weather Network		

A bus cancellation message will also be available at [www.schoolbuscity.com](http://www.schoolbuscity.com) and by calling 1-877-330-3001.

The above procedure is not applicable to school charters for field trips or other activities. Please confirm the cancellation of these trips with the school.